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Beginnings are such fun!

by Frank Cordaro

I just got back from dropping Frances and her four kids off at their new apartment. Their beds at our house will be filled tonight by two more mothers with their children, taking refuge from their husbands. So it goes, day to night, night to day the Kingdom comes. As I write this it is our third anniversary. I will try to give an inkling of how the houses came to be, but the real story of hospitality is hidden with those hundreds of guests who have come and gone, silent, and, to all but God, invisible.

The mustard seed of the Des Moines Catholic Worker was planted in the cold month of January, 1975. I was in my second year of theology at Aquinas Institute in Dubuque, and arranged to spend my January internship at the home of Bishop Dingman. We studied the lectionary together, and for my keep I drove the Bishop's car and helped with major cleaning projects at his house.

It was during this time of sharing that I read A Harsh and Dreadful Love, by William Miller, which Fr. Jack Kissling, my campus minister at U. N. I., had given me some time before. I remember being deeply struck by the book and wanted to know more about the Catholic Worker Movement and Dorothy Day. I talked to the Bishop about them. The exact conversation eludes me, but I remember that he was positive about the Worker and Dorothy.

Late that winter I found out that there was a Catholic Worker House in Davenport. Hoping to experience the Movement first-hand, I wrote the Davenport house and asked if I could volunteer for the summer. Margaret Quigly accepted my offer.

I had one of the best summers of my life there. The experience deepened my faith and my hope for Christian action. Hospitality was "applied Christ" in an ugly but real world. The Davenport summer convinced me of the urgent need for radical hospitality in every town and village in the country. The previous summer, spent in the South Bronx, had shattered my white-male-liberal world view, and this summer planted in me the seeds of an honest and faithful response to an insane world.

The following school year I completed my graduate studies and was to be ordained deacon, the last step before the priesthood. It became clearer and clearer through prayer and inner searching that the Church in Des Moines needed a Worker House more than it needed me to

be a priest. In the spring of 1976, after talking with Bishop Dingman, who gave me his blessing, I started having meetings with some friends in Des Moines. There were already two large mission houses for single men in town, but nothing for single women or families with no place to go, so we decided to open a house of hospitality for them. We also decided to start collecting donations towards the purchase of a house.

It was during this time that I met Joe DaVia through a mutual friend, Jacquee Dickey. She had worked with Joe in Cedar Rapids and felt that he was ripe for recruiting. She arranged our "destined" meeting and within five minutes I had talked Joe into quitting his job and joining our efforts. His gentleness and sensitivity would make us a great team during the initial months of the Worker House.

That same summer Father Jim Kiernan offered me hospitality at St. John's Rectory and I began to do full-time what I've doing the last three years: talking and begging. It was hard to talk about the C. W. without actually doing hospitality. I made a point of talking to each pastor in the area about what we planned to do. Some knew of the C. W., a few encouraged us, but most had a "wait and see" attitude.

Cy Engler, a former priest of the Dubuque diocese, was our real-estate person. Early in June he found us a three-bedroom house on Indiana. We looked it over and decided to buy it for \$8500. We had just enough for the down payment of \$1500 from the money we had begged since our first meeting. The closing date was set for August 23, 1976, the anniversary of the deaths of Sacco and Vanzetti.

That night Joe and I met for only the third time and moved into the house. It was a fitting date for two Italians to get together. And so it began.

It's been three years now. We bought another house right next door to the first and called it Monsignor Ligutti House. This summer we not only have our own garden but started a community garden right across the street from Ligutti House with fifteen Indochinese families (most of whom speak no English) who live in our neighborhood. We have a Justice and Peace center at Ligutti House. Our presence is felt in the neighborhood, in the city, and in the diocese.

But the real story of our Worker House is with more than 1500 guests who have come and

gone. Religions have their holy places, in buildings, on mountains, or wherever. In our tradition, holy places are where "epiphany" happens, where God is "shown forth". The Catholic Worker House is such a place. God comes and goes here just as truly as on Mount Tabor or in the Temple at Jerusalem, only here God is disguised as our guests.

I'd like to conclude by citing a special group of people, the twenty-five different members of our staff over the last three years. Joe DaVia is in campus ministry in Lansing, Michigan. Malcolm McKenzie is married with two sons (the younger born just this month), and has found a farm near Rome, New York. Eddie Polich is still our garden man. Mike and Ann Smith are in California. Father John Zeitler is with the Glenmary Missioners in Kentucky. Kate Miller is going to school again here in the city.

Jacquee Dickey is taking a break, living in the neighborhood and working at the "Soup Kitchen", a local restaurant. Sister Eve Kavanagh is working with Hospice. The whereabouts of Tony Caldiero and John "Butch" Welch are unknown. Tim Heller is with the Franciscans in Detroit. Karen String is finishing up at Wartburg College, and Nanette Droste is now working there, having just graduated.

Steve Marsden is, as always, in and out. Betty Goodnough is still with us, but soon to move on. Edson Howar is in New York City. Jim Barrett was last seen with some charismatics heading for Texas. Benny Bliss is teaching business at A. I. B.

Suzanne Peterson is still assistant pastor at St. Paul's Episcopal Church downtown. Richard Cleaver is soon to depart for Japan. Peter DeMott has been in jail for an action at the Pentagon and has just been given a suspended sentence. Donna Henderson has just begun law school at St. Louis University. Leeann Irwin is finishing school at Iowa State. Brent Vanderlinden just joined us and is working for the Register and Tribune.

We have been blessed with just enough hands to do the work we are supposed to do, sometimes more hands than at other times, but always enough. I believe (I have to) that God will send us the help we need, as during the last three years. Anyone who is interested in coming and being changed for life, just ask any of those I've named.



Robert Hodgell

Discussions

Cult and culture are the first two points in Peter Maurin's program for the Catholic Worker movement. Therefore, Mass is celebrated every Friday night (unless otherwise noted) at the Worker house, 713 Indiana (one block north of University), at 8:00 pm. Following the liturgy, discussions take place (in Peter's phrase, "clarification of thought"). All are welcome.

Upcoming discussions are as follows:

- Sept. 21: Goodbye party for Betty.
- Sept. 28: The Bishop will celebrate Mass and then there will be a discussion with him about the land-use pastoral.
- Oct. 5: Regional FOR conference; no Mass or meeting.
- Oct. 12: Audrey Aronson Myers of the National Committee to Support the Marion Brothers will speak.
- Oct. 19: PAX CHRISTI conference; no Mass or meeting.
- Oct. 26: There will be a slide show and discussion about the Pontiac Brothers frame-up.
- Nov. 2: Demonstration in Chicago; no Mass or meeting.

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Community: Richard Cleaver, Frank Cordaro, Peter DeMott, Betty Goodnough, Brent Vanderlinden.

THANK YOU!

713 Indiana Ave.
Des Moines, Iowa
September, 1979

Dear good friends,

This letter comes to you on the occasion of a special period in my history as a Catholic Worker House. It has become my third birthday and I am experiencing it with deep feelings of achievement and gratitude. I am filled up and overflowing with these emotions and I feel that I and my staff must now tell you how thankful we are for the part each of you has played in my growth from an embryonic dream to the substantial reality I am today.

It was Cy Engler who out of his interest and on his own time located my original, shabby self here on Indiana Avenue. Attorney Ray Conley was responsible for the execution of the legal procedure necessary to finalize my purchase and, later on, that of Ligutti House. Both of these friends offered their talents and assistance without charge.

Holy Trinity Parish has been a strong source of assistance from the start with a contribution of \$4000 from which bills for all utilities have been paid during these three years. How could this house which cares for troubled and needy ones have ever functioned without this particular support, so costly and necessary?

Another group (actually it includes many of the same people) which we owe thanks to is the Elizabeth Seton Council of the Knights of Columbus, who put a new roof on Ligutti House.

Once more my staff and I extend to the Altar and Rosary Society of Holy Trinity our heartfelt gratitude of the steady, unrelenting work they do in our ministry. For the past two years, out of the demands on their already busy lives, these ladies, with the support of (and often the actual help of) their husbands, call for our laundry each Tuesday, wash it and return it folded. We can think of no greater example of one's desire to be of service to God in His poor and disadvantaged than in this most unglamorous and hidden task. Since we are without laundry facilities and nearly always understaffed, it is obvious that we simply could not operate without this special help.

Through the interest and efforts of the Omega group of Cottage Grove Presbyterian Church, St. Anne's Mothers Club, and the Drake Newman Community, we have enjoyed many delicious meals fully prepared by these kind folks and brought to the house. They have also been a faithful source of food supplies and have been ready on occasion to give financial assistance to our guests.

During the school year, the children of the following schools have been regular promoters (with their teachers) of food drives,

and perhaps more than any other group, they have been responsible for keeping my shelves filled with canned goods: St. Joseph's, Visitation, Sacred Heart, St. Theresa's, Holy Trinity, Christ the King, and St. Peter's. We very grateful to them, and to the Altar Society of Christ the King, for their willing aid.

There are others to whom we have good reason to extend our public, as well as our personal thanks. La Pizza House sees to it that most of the time there are several pizzas in the freezer. These add a welcome variety to our meals and are a great boon to a pressured staff. An unknown salesman in some way connected with Prairie Farms sees to it that two gallons of milk are made available to the house each week. Wherever you are, friend, on behalf of our guest and ourselves, we send you our thanks. On a regular

basis, ACRES and Hy-Vee on Euclid make available to us their damaged and no longer saleable fruits, vegetable and canned goods. While some of this must be thrown away, a portion of it can be used, and during unseasonable times Hy-Vee is our only respite from canned fruits and vegetables. Needless to say, their support is appreciated.

We have a close and regular relationship with the St. Vincent de Paul Store on 6th Avenue. Many of our guests, both men and women, find day work there, and clothing without charge, if they need it. In addition, if my tired and worn furniture totally collapses, St. Vincent's can be counted on to come to the rescue. We want them to have our genuine thanks for this assistance, as well as for their confidence and cooperation.

Several people, by the nature of their participation in the needs of this house and its guests, have been on-going support over these three years, and we want them all to know once again how much this is appreciated.

Jim Leonardo of Holy Trinity, a kind and jovial friend, is someone we're privileged to see often. We've but to call him when our bread and bakery supply is low. Jim then buys and picks up these items, no longer "strictly fresh", from certain bakery sources and delivers them to my door. Funaro's Bakery has been another source of baked goods.

Rev. Bob Cook has been a strong aid and support from the first and we're grateful for the interest he has generated through the CROSS program. Emergency financial help to guests has been but one evidence of this program's assistance.

Helen Tichy of All Saints has been our longest-standing supporter and friend. She has given many hours substituting at the house so the staff could be relieved; she has been responsible for a great deal of food that has reached our table from various sources. Helen tells of the times in the beginning when she dropped

by to find Joe DaVia, Eddie Polich and Frank eating lunch or supper, with the food on the table more than likely peanut butter, bread and beans! Helen is appreciated.

Florence Loss never forgets our need when there is a surplus of ground beef at MacDonald's and we are happy, too, that there's an excuse for her to drop by with her warm and caring smile.

Whenever there is food left over from festive occasions at the VFW in Urbandale, Marion sees to it that we receive a share of this. It's good to be remembered especially with food these days.

We all, along with the occupants of my sister, Ligutti House, have reason to be grateful to Tony Punelli who sold us the furnace there at cost, and then installed it without charge. This was a substantial gift and it is justifiably appreciated.

We have daily reason to remember and be thankful to Don Broadbent, for it is through him that we have on hand a continuing supply of institutional soap for dishwashing and cleaning. In addition, it was through his influence that the van we use for transportation was purchased for a considerably reduced amount. Additionally, as a former officer of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, we could count on his influence there when emergency assistance was needed for guests.

More recently, we've had occasion to be grateful to Mrs. Faustina Anderson who made and helped to hang the beautiful draw curtains in my living and dining area and the living room of Ligutti House. These finely-made draperies have transformed the somewhat barren and dreary interiors into rooms of warmth and beauty. How could they not make a great contribution to the pleasure of those who both live and work here? A lovely gift from a thoughtful and generous woman. We will ever be thankful.

We would like to remember with appreciation Rev. Don Carver who has been a compassionate source of funds to guests at times when they have needed this.

Jenny Salvato and Sherry

Rickabaugh have been coming around for the past months to help with hospitality and our many other activities. They plan to continue and we're glad to hear this; not only is the assistance needed, but it is a pleasure to have them about. Thanks to both.

As this letter draws closer to its conclusion, we want to say how fortunate we are that Bishop Maurice Dingman has welcomed the staff and its ministry to the diocese. We're happy he has blessed me with his presence and in his role as Bishop. We are ever grateful his interest and support.

At this time, too, we want to express our deep feelings of appreciation to Fathers Dan Welsh, Dave Polich and John Richter for their ready support, their time, and their money.

And how could we close without mentioning our most regular guest at Friday night Mass? Angela Cordaro has been not only a staunch supporter of our liturgical life but of our other activities as well, and we are grateful for her giving us her joyful presence and wisdom (as well as for giving us Frank!).

I want those many of you whose regular financial donations represent the foundation on which I rest to know how grateful my guests and I are for the concern and interest which your gifts represent.

I know that there are many whom I have not mentioned by name, to whom thanks are due as well. You know who you are, and so does God; please accept our gratitude. My staff and I think of you as our extended community. We find a large measure of encouragement in your willingness to share our concerns and our responsibilities. We find an easing of stress in the knowledge that you are standing by. We are grateful for your friendship.

And now, from my house to yours, may the love and peace of Christ be there with you.

The Catholic Worker House



The general aim of the Catholic Worker Movement is to realize in the individual and in society the express and implicit teachings of Christ, especially as found in the Sermon on the Mount [Matt. 5:3-7:27] and in the call to solidarity with the needy [Matt. 25:31-46]. We must begin with an examination of our present society to determine how it meets the requirements of those teachings.

The society in which we live, and which is generally called capitalist (because of its method of producing wealth) and bourgeois (because of its prevalent mentality), is not in accord with justice and charity in the following ways:

IN ECONOMICS--because the guiding principle is production for profit and because production determines needs. In addition, there is a non-producing class which is maintained by the labor of others. This class systematically robs the workers of the wealth they have produced over and above what is needed for their bare maintenance.

A just society would provide the necessities of life for all, and the common good, rather than profit, would determine what would be produced. Furthermore, the workers would control the fruits of their labor. "From each according to his or her ability, to each according to his or her need."

IN PSYCHOLOGY--because capitalist society fails to consider the whole nature of the human being. Rather, it regards people solely as an economic factor in production. They are items in the expense sheets of employers. Profit alone determines what kind of work they will do; hence the deadly routine of assembly lines. This dehumanization also causes women to be seen exclusively as sexual commodities, as producers of children to increase the labor supply, and as home-bound consumers of unnecessary items, rather than as full human beings capable of independent lives.

In a just society, the question would be whether a certain kind of work was in accord with human dignity and wholeness, not whether it would bring a profit to the exploiters of labor.

IN SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS--because capitalism is maintained by class warfare. Since the aim of the capitalist employer is to obtain labor as cheaply as possible, while the aim of labor is to sell itself as dearly as possible and to buy what is produced as cheaply as possible, there is an inevitable and persistent conflict between them which can only be overcome when the capitalist class ceases to exist. Furthermore, the capitalist class fosters division among people along lines other than purely economic ones, in order to maintain its dominance. Thus, races are pitted against one another; the old and (increasingly) children are kept out of sight; and lesbians and gay men are denied any status whatever by church and society. Thus, rich and poor alike suffer increasingly from isolation, from madness,

CATHOLIC WORK

and from growing individual violence, this last abetted by the State's emphasis on implements of war instead of on human well-being.

In a just society, there would be no classes. People would perform different functions, but there would no longer exist an employer/wage-earner relationship. We would rejoice in God's gifts, those given to us all to be shared, and those given to individuals and groups which demonstrate our infinite variety.

IN ITS RELATIONSHIP TO NATURE--because it has strayed from the Biblical ideal of stewardship of natural resources rather than exploitation of them for profit. In this, we have failed to learn from the example of those who preceded us on this continent. Our misuse of fertile agricultural land, our poisoning of the environment, our selfish insistence on depleting non-renewable resources, and, in particular, our folly in continuing to ignore the dangers of nuclear power (chiefly because of its intimate connections with the war industry) are grave offenses against God's creation.

In a just society, human beings would live in harmony with the rest of nature, and all would join together in praise of their Creator.

WE SEE THE PROLIFERATION OF nuclear power and weapons as the clearest sign of the direction of our age. It is a denial of the very right of people to life, and, implicitly, a denial of God. There is a direct economic and moral connection between the arms race and destitution. In the words of Vatican II, "The arms race is an utterly treacherous trap for humanity, and one which injures the poor to an intolerable degree."

Neither capitalism nor Bolshevik communism pursue the common good, since, as a consequence of their basic principles, both either economically sanction or legally impose violations of justice and charity. Each fosters the ever-increasing power of the State; as a result, there is a genuine lack of control over any consistent movement toward even a human, much less a Christ-centered world.

THEREFORE, TO ACHIEVE A JUST SOCIETY WE ADVOCATE a complete rejection of the present social order and a non-violent revolution to establish an order more in accord with Christian truth. We envision a social order based on St. Thomas Aquinas' doctrine of the common good, in which the freedom and dignity of the whole person is fostered, and the good of each person is bound to the good of the whole community.

This can only be done by direct action, since political means have failed, and will continue to fail, as a method for bringing about such a society.

We believe, therefore, in PERSONALISM, in taking on ourselves responsibility for changing conditions to the extent

KER POSITIONS

that we are able. By establishing houses of hospitality, we take care of as many of those in need as we can by ourselves, rather than turning them over to the impersonal "charity" of the State [James 2:17]. We do not do this in order to patch up the wrecks of the capitalist system, but rather because there is always a shared responsibility in such things and the call to minister to our brothers and sisters transcends any consideration of economics. We feel that what anyone possesses beyond basic necessities does not belong to him or her, but rather to those who are without it.

We believe in COMMUNITY as a potent remedy for the isolation and spiritual destitution prevalent today. We try to live together simply, striving for a voluntary poverty and dispossessing ourselves of superfluous goods, to witness against the consumerism of industrial society. We recall the early Christians, who lived in common and shared their goods, following St. Paul's dictum, "Let your abundance supply their want [2Cor. 8:14]". We have both responsibilities and limits in our use of material possessions. Pope Paul VI wrote, "Private property does not constitute for anyone an absolute and unconditioned right. No one is justified in keeping for their exclusive use what they do not need, when others lack necessities." Christ came to teach us that the spirit of poverty is the way to the Kingdom [Luke 18:24-25]. Indeed, we have found that much joy and freedom can be found in living simply, and in sharing. Such a life can open opportunities for personal liberation that serve as a basis for our efforts toward liberation on a larger scale [1John 2:15-17].

We believe in withdrawal from the capitalist system so far as each is able. We reject the State, the parties and prisons, flags and armies that maintain it, and its dehumanizing effects, such as mass production in industry and education, large hospitals, agri-business, and impersonal bureaucracies. Thus, we favor the establishment of a DISTRIBUTIST economy wherein those who have a vocation to the land will work on the farms surrounding the village and those who have other vocations will work in the village itself, while remaining in close contact with the land. We see this as possible in urban neighborhoods as well, by the conversion of wasted land into community gardens. In this way we will have a decentralized economy which will dispense with the State as we know it and will be federationist in character, as was society during certain periods preceding the rise of nation-states.

We believe in WORKER OWNERSHIP of the means of production and distribution, as distinct from nationalization. This is to be accomplished by decentralized cooperatives and the elimination of a separate employer class. It is revolution from

below and not, as political revolutions are, from above. It calls for widespread and universal ownership of property as a stepping-stone to a COMMUNISM that will be in accord with the example of the Apostles [Acts 2:42-47] and with the Christian teaching of detachment from material goods. When realized, it will express itself in common ownership: "Property, the more common it is, the more holy it is," wrote St. Gertrude.

We believe in the complete EQUALITY of all women and men as sisters and brothers created by a loving God. Racism, sexism, heterosexism, ageism, classism; all of these are blasphemy against God whose image is incarnate in us all and whose death has redeemed us all [Gal. 3:28]. We come to God freely or not at all, and it is not the place of anyone or any institution to force the Faith on anyone else. Persecution of any person or group is therefore a serious sin.

We believe further that the revolution that is to be pursued in ourselves and in society must be PACIFIST. Otherwise it will proceed by force and use means that are evil and which will never be outgrown. They will then determine the end of the revolution, and that end will again be coercion and tyranny. We reject the use of evil means for any end whatsoever, for we believe that Christ went beyond natural ethics and the Old Dispensation in matters of force and war and taught non-violence as a way of life [Matt. 26:52]. When we set ourselves against tyranny and injustice, we must do so by spiritual means and by non-cooperation. Refusal to pay taxes, refusal to register for the draft, refusal to take part in civil-defense drills, non-violent strikes, boycotts, non-violent occupations, symbolic actions and prayer are all methods that can be used in this pursuit of justice.

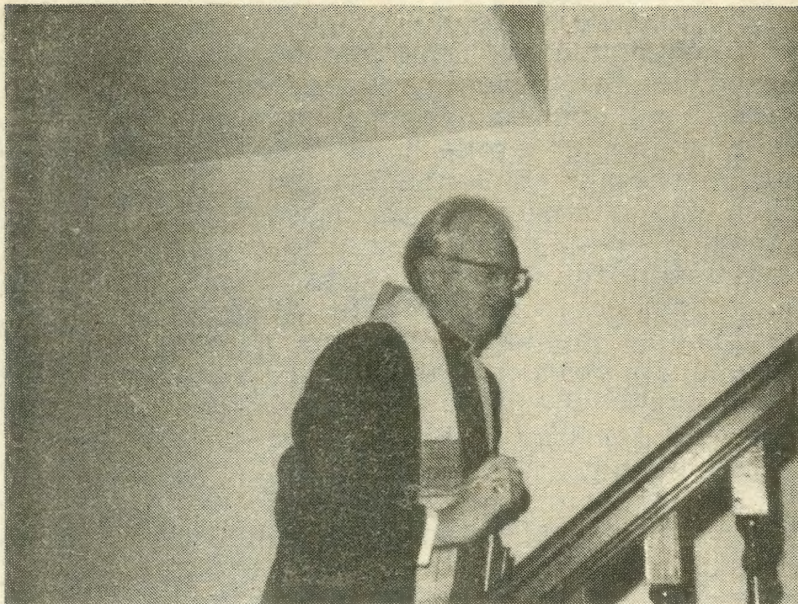
We see this as an era of great doubt and anxiety. In response, we, as a lay movement, seek our strength and direction in the beauty of regular prayer and liturgy, in studying the traditions of Scripture and the teachings of the Church, and in applying them to the modern condition. Thus directed, our efforts to perform our duty as Christians range widely, from visiting the sick to occupying nuclear power plant sites.

We believe that success, as the world determines it, is not the criterion by which a movement should be judged [Rom. 12:2].

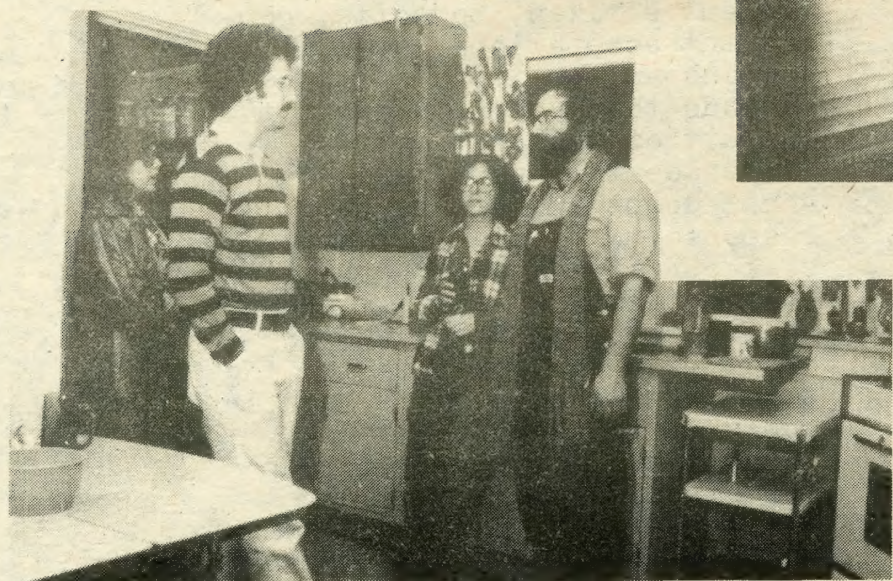
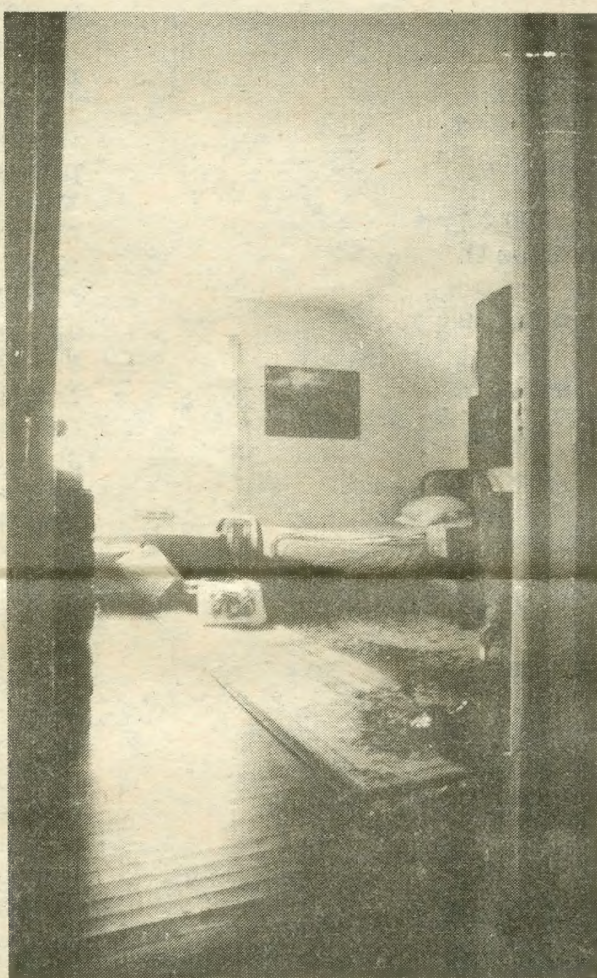
We must be prepared and ready to face seeming failure. The most important thing is that we adhere to Christian values, which transcend time. On the last day we will be asked for an accounting, not as to whether those values succeeded, as the world judges success (though we hope and trust that they will) but as to whether we remained true to them, even against the world.



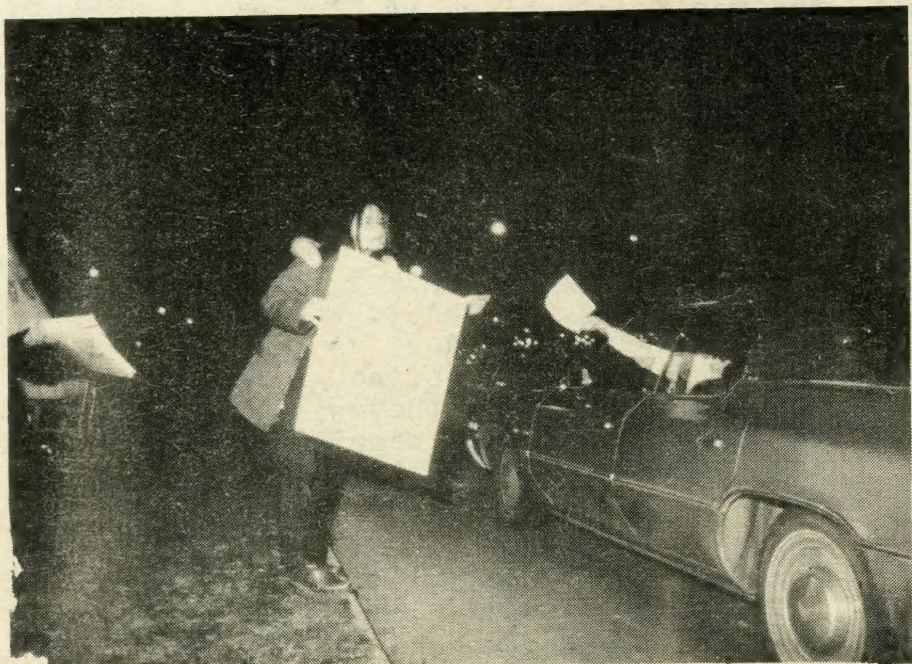
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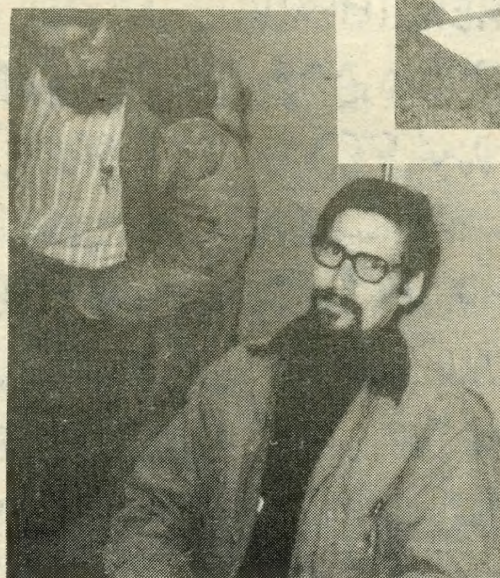


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Our



selves



"THE HEAVEN, EVEN THE HEAVENS, ARE THE LORD'S; BUT THE EARTH HATH HE GIVEN TO THE CHILDREN OF MEN." AS SERVANTS OF GOD OUR LANDS & ESTATES WE HOLD UNDER HIM AS HIS GIFTS; AND IN APPLYING THE PROFITS IT IS OUR DUTY TO ACT CONSISTENTLY WITH THE DESIGNS OF OUR BENEFactor. IMPERFECT MEN MAY GIVE FROM MOTIVES OF MISGUIDED AFFECTION, BUT PERFECT WISDOM & GOODNESS GIVES AGREEABLY TO HIS OWN NATURE; NOR IS THIS GIFT ABSOLUTE, BUT CONDITIONAL, FOR US TO OCCUPY AS DUTIFUL CHILDREN, AND NOT OTHERWISE; FOR HE ALONE IS THE TRUE PROPRIETOR. "THE WORLD," SAID HE, "IS MINE, & THE FULLNESS THEREOF." THE INSPIRED LAWGIVER DIRECTED THAT SUCH OF THE ISRAELITES AS SOLD THEIR INHERITANCE SHOULD SELL IT FOR A TERM ONLY, AND THAT THEY AND THEIR CHILDREN SHOULD AGAIN ENJOY IT IN THE YEAR OF JUBILEE, SETTLED ON EVERY FIFTIETH YEAR. "THE LAND SHALL NOT BE SOLD FOREVER, FOR THE LAND IS MINE, SAITH THE LORD, FOR YE ARE STRANGERS AND SOJOURNERS WITH ME." THIS WAS DESIGNED TO PREVENT THE RICH FROM OPPRESSING THE POOR BY TOO MUCH ENGROSSING THE LAND; AND OUR BLESSED REDEEMER SAID, "TILL HEAVEN AND EARTH SHALL PASS, ONE JOT OR ONE TITTLE SHALL IN NO WISE PASS FROM THE LAW, TILL ALL BE FULFILLED."

WHEN DIVINE LOVE TAKES PLACE IN THE HEART OF ANY PEOPLE, AND THEY STEADILY ACT IN A PRINCIPLE OF UNIVERSAL RIGHTEOUSNESS, THEN THE TRUE INTENT OF THE LAW IS FULFILLED, THOUGH THEIR OUTWARD MODES OF PROCEEDING MAY BE VARIOUS; BUT WHEN MEN ARE POSSESSED BY THAT SPIRIT HINTED AT BY THE PROPHET, AND, LOOKING OVER THEIR WEALTH SAY IN THEIR HEARTS, "HAVE WE NOT TAKEN TO US HORNS BY OUR OWN STRENGTH?" THEY DEVIATE FROM THE DIVINE LAW AND DO NOT COUNT THEIR POSSESSIONS SO STRICTLY GOD'S, NOR THE WEAK AND POOR ENTITLED TO SO MUCH OF THE INCREASE THEREOF BUT THAT THEY MAY INDULGE THEIR DESIRES IN CONFORMING TO WORDLY POMP. THEN WHEN HOUSE IS JOINED TO HOUSE, AND FIELD LAID TO FIELD, UNTIL THERE IS NO PLACE, AND THE POOR ARE THEREBY STRAITENED, THOUGH THIS IS DONE BY BARGAIN & PURCHASE, YET SO FAR AS IT STANDS DISTINGUISHED FROM UNIVERSAL LOVE, SO FAR THAT WOE PREDICTED BY THE PROPHET WILL ACCOMPANY THEIR PROCEEDINGS. AS HE WHO FIRST FOUNDED

THE EARTH WAS THEN THE TRUE PROPRIETOR OF IT, SO HE STILL REMAINS,
AND THOUGH HE HAS GIVEN IT TO THE CHILDREN OF MEN, SO THAT —
MULTITUDES OF PEOPLE HAVE HAD THEIR SUSTENANCE FROM IT WHILE THEY
CONTINUED HERE, YET HE HATH NEVER ALIENATED IT, BUT HIS RIGHT IS
AS GOOD AS AT FIRST; NOR CAN ANY APPLY THE INCREASE OF THEIR
POSSESSIONS CONTRARY TO UNIVERSAL LOVE, NOR DISPOSE OF LANDS IN A
WAY WHICH THEY KNOW TENDS TO EXALT SOME BY OPPRESSING OTHERS,
WITHOUT BEING JUSTLY CHARGEABLE WITH USURPATION. —

— SECTION X OF THE ESSAY
"A WORD OF REMEMBRANCE
AND CAUTION TO THE RICH"
BY JOHN WOOLMAN, OF THE
SOCIETY OF FRIENDS, (1720-1772),
IN WHICH THE AUTHOR ANTI-
PATES THE VIEWS OF THE LAND
USE PASTORAL BY THE MIDWEST
BISHOPS, "STRANGERS & GUESTS".
WOULD THAT WE HAD LISTENED
TO THIS VOICE 200 YEARS AGO!

R. CLEAVER, CALLIGRAPHER
9-12-79



In the beginning...

by Joe DaVia

[The entries below are extracts from the journal kept by Joe DaVia during the first months of the House's existence. He is now in campus ministry in Michigan, and sent these along to us for our third anniversary issue. Many thanks!]



Wednesday, September 15, 1976

On the "Opening" of the Des Moines Catholic Worker

Lord, you found your way to our doorstep tonight. We were surprised.

The days of peace of the reading, the quiet, the contemplation had settled in us. We wondered if you'd ever visit.

We saw the prophets Mary, the woman who the world shunned. Carrie, whose bad back prevented her from doing manual, godly labor. The prophets baptized by broken dreams. We welcomed the prophets we offered each other hospitality. They left, and didn't shake the dust from their sandals.

Welcome Lord, but you didn't come as we expected. There was a mass tonight. Many of your followers were there. Friends who believe in hospitality To bless our work in your name. We broke the bread, Shared the wine and friendship and they left.

Then you came.

You weren't a man. you came as a woman who was broken so we could be made whole. Your blood smelled of wine the spiritual liquid we've chosen to drink.

Welcome, Lord, the way from the cab was hard you stumbled and fell Let me help you, Lord.

We helped you in and you cursed us, said how we were wrong. But, Lord, we're human

We're doing the best we can.

Welcome.

Sunday, September 19, 1976

....today Ghis invited me over for mass at the Bishop's residence. I thought there'd be 20-40 people and was prepared to pass out "Workers". Anyway, it turned out there was only Sr. Kevin, the Bishop, Ghis and myself.

Saturday, October 30, 1976

....just returned from a visit to my parents' home in Detroit. The hose is filling up more. Annalee, a charismatic guest, is already getting on my nerves....

Wednesday, November 3, 1976

Our first full house(since I've been here). Velma, Judy and Barb, and Donna Lyn in the dorm room, and Delbert, Maryann and Floyd in the gold bedroom. Delbert is a transient laborer and changes jobs often.

But Judy, my prayers for her. Her husband is very jealous and beats her often. She's decided that's no life for her and walked out until he gets treatment--a good decision....



Friday, August 27, 1976

Well, Frank and I are settled in the Dorothy Day Catholic Worker House at 713 Indiana, D. M. Nice place. As of now, I've met a lot of religious in the community. They're good, crazy people.

Good article in the August Worker on levity in the Lord. Speaks of craziness.

Sunday, August 29, 1976

Another day of cleaning. Not much more of it to do, thank goodness.

Had to write about last night, though. After spending the night dancing with Ghislaine, I quietly tried to go into my upper bunk. Did well, until I lost my balance on the way up. I put my hand through a window, and woke Frank. Geez, did I wake Frank. He woke up screaming, and clutched my upper bunk and was prepared to throw it. He clutched so hard that he cut his hands. Later he mentioned he thought he was being attacked by some adversaries from the Evelyn Davis Clinic he's working on. He's still got the jitters.

Things here are goin well. Plenty of acquaintances, with friendships hopefully soon to follow....

Friday, September 10, 1976

The house is officially open now. We had our first guest Wednesday night. Mary--a distraught woman in her 50's who fell through one of the holes in the American Machine and landed in the "unclassified" pile. A nurse by training, with a mental/emotional problem of sorts, she stopped by today to thank us for our lodging, and to complement us on the neat house we keep, for a couple of bachelors.

Thanks for the hospitality, Mary!

NEEDS

We need an increase in donations, We may have just enough money to pay for this special issue of via pacis. The donation from Holy Trinity Parish of two years ago that has been paying for gas and electricity is at last almost depleted. We will have to be taking in \$300-400 more every month as the winter approaches. Our van may or may not make it through the winter. We will be so low on staff that we may not be able to have one of us working. Please, keep us in mind.

EVENTS:

August 6-9 were marked by many activities in Des Moines and the rest of Iowa. The gathering sponsored by the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom at the Japanese bell on Sunday the fifth drew close to seventy people. The next day Peter De Mott ran eight and a half miles to the edge of town to dramatize the effects of a nuclear weapon on Des Moines, and at noon about twenty-five of us from the Mobilization for Survival staged a "die-in" at the Federal Building. The "Young People's Celebration for Life" the next day at noon was a hit with the thirty-five kids there. Around a hundred people showed up on the evening of the ninth for the ecumenical memorial service. Two of us at the house, myself and Richard had earlier that day climbed over the fence at the SAC base in Omaha, in the company of Jim Dubert from Ames and John Shiel from Washington, D.C. Once over, we prayed the rosary and held a banner which said: "August 9, 1945/Nagasaki/Lord,



Have Mercy". Then we climbed back over the fence, joined in prayer with our eight supporters and came home.

Monsignor Ligutti Community Garden is winding down. The harvest has tapered off and we expect to have a follow-up with the families that participated. I want to thank everyone who helped this year, especially Leeann Irwin. Next year will be better as the soil slowly returns to producing food instead of collecting glass and bricks.

Thanks also to Eddie Polich who worked our garden, bringing in the biggest crop yet. Our land is blessed as long as we honor it.

The Marion Brothers Committee is helping to plan a demonstration at the Federal Building in Chicago on November 3 at noon. An ad hoc "November 3 Coalition" is calling for the closing of the Marion Control Unit, an end to the death penalty, and the freeing of the Pontiac Brothers, who are the victims of a frame-up. Those in the Des Moines area who want to go should let us know here at the CW.

The religious delegation is still trying to get permission to inspect the unit on November 20. Bishop Dingman has said he will go to Marion whether permission is granted or not.

A slide show of the CW's

activities is being put together. Sherry Rickabaugh is our photographer and Eddie Polich has generously agreed to give us the money for a projector. We intend to use this whenever we are asked to give presentations about our work. Keep us in mind for speaking engagements--we'll go a long way for a free meal!

Pope John Paul II's visit to Des Moines has us, like everyone else, in a state of anticipation. We expect the Holy Father to continue to speak out, as we have, against materialistic values as he did in Mexico and Poland, and we hope that while in the U. S. he will address himself to the issue of disarmament which this country so badly needs to hear.

A Catholic Worker farm has been one of our dreams since we started three years ago. I only mention it now because we hope that in the next three years the dream will become a reality. On the surface we are no closer to it now than we were then, but God works in wondrous ways. We have always had folks interested in living on the land close to

Des Moines. We only need a few acres and a building for starters. I toss out this hope. Who knows? We may be closer to a farm than we think; everything is possible in prayer.

PEOPLE:

Peter is, we hope, on his way home at the time of this writing. He was arrested at a demonstration at the Pentagon on Labor Day, and spent eight days awaiting the trial, sitting in jail. He was given a two-year suspended sentence for putting the last two letters on the word "death" in blood on a pillar, after someone else was taken away. Peter never could leave anything unfinished.

Brent Vanderlinden is our newest staff member. He is working to pay off a personal debt and living at Ligutti House. He is handy at fixing electrical and plumbing problems, and also tinkers with machines. In short, he is heaven-sent, and I only pray I don't overwork him. Welcome, friend.

We are suffering losses, however, as well as rejoicing in additions.

Betty is putting up the white flag. She says, "You'd have to be crazy to spend another winter here like the last one," and has decided to head Southwest at the end of

September to where her energies can be used more constructively than in battling the weather. Betty will be sorely missed, after giving us the benefit of her experience and wisdom for a year and a half. Thank you for your gifts, Betty. We wish you the best on your new adventure.

Richard is editing his last issue of via pacis. He too will be leaving at the end of September to join his parents in Japan. He will be studying Japanese, teaching English at the Orthodox Cathedral in Tokyo, and checking out the local radical scene.

Leeann has returned to Iowa State University. We hope to see her on weekends when she begins to miss having the crying of little children to keep her awake early in the morning.

Meanwhile, I'm reminded of Dorothy Day's favorite remark when saying goodbye to one of the many staff people who come and go at the New York Worker: "the gold goes and the dross remains". My only concern is, how is the dross to keep the houses

going? I'm praying that God sends the people we need to do the work God wants us to do. Faith is a hard thing to misplace at a CW house. You're always aware of it because you always need it!

DATES TO REMEMBER:

Oct. 3--"The Christian Church as a Catalyst for Peace", a seminar for clergy and laity on the Middle East conflict, at the American Friends Service Committee, 4211 Grand Avenue, Des Moines, 50312. Contact Corinne Whitlatch at 274-4851 or the CW.

Oct. 4--Pope John Paul's visit.

Oct. 5-7--Fellowship of Reconciliation regional conference: "Peace Conversion: Taking the Profit out of War--Putting the Prophet into Life". Frontenac United Methodist Camp, Frontenac MN. Contact Terry Irish, FOR Registrar, 195 Summit Avenue, St. Paul MN 55102, or in Des Moines, Dan Clark, 274-4851.

Oct. 13-15--Events surrounding the National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights on Oct. 14. For information and transportation, call (toll-free) 800-528-7382.

Oct. 19-21--PAX CHRISTI national conference: "Seek Peace and Pursue It: Spirituality and Strategy for the Nuclear Age". Benedictine College, Atchison KS. Contact Angie O'Gorman, 908 E. 31st Street, Kansas City MO 64109, 816-753-2677, or in Des Moines, Jacquee Dickey, 280-9020.



via pacis

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